

Message Text

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43

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 ISO-00 OPIC-06 SAM-01 CIAE-00 PM-03 H-02

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1965

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES

AMCONSUL LUANDA

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION NATO

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

USMISSION USBERLIN

AMEMBASSY BERLIN

DIA WASHDC

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

AMCONSUL OPORTO

UNCLAS LISBON 1244

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TAGS: SOPN, PINT, PO

SUBJECT: SOARES REPLIES TO ALLEGATIONS OF COMPLICITY IN PLOT

1. FOLLOWING IS THE TEXT OF A LETTER TO THE EDITOR OF LISBON
AFTERNOON DAILY A CAPITAL FROM FOREIGN MINISTER MARIO SOARES,
SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY, CONCERNING INTER ALIA
THE ALLEGATION THAT THE CIA PLANS A COUP IN PORTUGAL. THE LETTER
WAS CARRIED IN A CAPITAL MAR 5.

2. BEGIN TEXT. CAPITAL OF MAR 3, WHICH I ONLY READ YESTERDAY
(MAR 4) CARRIED TWO PIECES OF NEWS ON PAGE ONE, BOTH EQUALLY
INSIDIOUS, AGAINST THE SOCIALIST PARTY THAT CONSTITUTE FLAGRANT
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EVIDENCE OF MEDIA "INTOXICATION" AND IDEOLOGICAL AGGRESSION.

BECAUSE OF ITS EXTRAORDINARY REPRESENTATION THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY, ESPECIALLY AMONG THE MASSES, THE SOCIALIST PARTY DURING THE LAST FEW WEEKS HAS DISTURBED THE DEFENDERS OF THE SINGLE PARTY SYSTEM AND HAS SUFFERED VICIOUS ATTACKS AND LOW BLOWS. BUT THOSE AT CAPITAL WHO STRUCK AT US YESTERDAY HAVE GONE TOO FAR, EVEN FOR A PRESS THAT IS OVERLY-PARTIAL AND MANIPULATED

THE PAGE-ONE STORY, WHICH WAS CONTINUED ON PAGE 9, OCCUPIED ALMOST THE ENTIRE PAGE. IT IS ENTITLED "CIA PLANS COUP D'ETAT IN PORTUGAL BEFORE THE END OF MARCH." IT CONCERNS AN ARTICLE THAT MIGHT HAVE APPEARED IN A GERMAN MAGAZINE CALLED "EXTRA" AND WHICH SMELLS TO HIGH HEAVEN TO ANY IMPARTIAL OBSERVER. IT IS AN OPERATION MOUNTED BY RIVAL SECRET SERVICES IN THE INTEREST OF ANOTHER SUPERPOWER IN ORDER TO SPREAD CONFUSION AND POISON PEOPLES' MINDS.

LITTLE VERSED IN MATTERS OF SPYCRAFT, I DO NOT KNOW WHETHER OR NOT THE CIA IS PREPARING A COUP D'ETAT IN PORTUGAL. WHAT SEEMS TO ME EVIDENT IS THAT THE WAY IN WHICH THE ACCUSATION IS MADE DEMANDS CRITICIS. IN THE FIRST PLACE, IT WOULD BE IMPORTANT TO KNOW HOW A CAPITAL ACQUIRED THE TEXT OF "EXTRA" SINCE NO NEWS AGENCY DISSEMINATED IT. THE "MAGAZINE" IN QUESTION IS A BULLETIN PRINTED IN SIX THOUSAND COPIES IN WEST BERLIN. IT IS SUBSIDIZED BY THE EAST AND HAS CLEARLY A COMMUNIST TENDENCY. WHEN INTERNATIONALLY KNOWN AND RESPONSIBLE ORGANS OF INFORMATION PUBLISH IMPORTANT ARTICLES ABOUT PORTUGAL, THE NEWS AGENCIES DISSEMINATE THEM AS DO OUR NEWSPAPERS. ON SERIOUS MATTERS, THEY HAVE THE HABIT OF CONTACTING THE INTERESTED PARTIES IN ORDER TO OBTAIN COMMENT. HEREIN LIES AN ELEMENTARY PRINCIPLE OF PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISM. NOTHING LIKE THIS HAPPENED IN THE PRESENT INSTANCE. IN AN ANONYMOUS WAY, BUT AS THOUGH IT WERE REVEALING AN ULTIMATE TRUTH, THE MOST SERIOUS ACCUSATIONS ARE REPRODUCED AGAINST A LEGALLY CONSTITUTED PARTY INSINUATING THAT THERE ARE DIVISIONS WITHIN THE PARTY AND THAT THE PARTY HAS EXTREMELY SUSPICIOUS CONNECTIONS CONSPIRING AGAINST PORTUGAL. THE ARTICLE ACCUSES WITHOUT PROOF TWO ACCREDITED AMBASSADORS IN OUR COUNTRY, A MINISTER, AND A SECRETARY OF STATE, AND BEFORE

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PRINTING ALL OF THIS, WHICH, IF TRUE, WOULD BE NEWS CAPABLE OF CREATING THE GREATEST DISTURBANCE AND WHICH WOULD HAVE THE GREATEST INTERNATIONAL CONSEQUENCES, A CAPITAL DID NOT EVEN THINK IT WAS OBLIGED TO INFORM THE PERSONS ACCUSED AND HEAR THEIR VIEWS ON THE MATTER.

I ASK: HOW WOULD IT BE IF AN ANONYMOUS BULLETIN HYPOTHETICALLY PUBLISHED IN A LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRY AND,

LET US SAY, SUBSIDIZED BY THE CIA, WERE TO PUBLISH NEWS OF A PHONY COUP D'ETAT IN LISBON PLANNED BY THE KGB TO TAKE PLACE BEFORE THE END OF MARCH AND WHICH, CONTINUING THE ABSURD HYPOTHESIS, WOULD INVOLVE THE AMBASSADOR OF AN EASTERN COUNTRY WHO IS ALSO AN AGENT OF THE KGB, AND THE RIGHT WING OF THE PORTUGUESE COMMUNIST PARTY, BY DIRECT ORDER FROM MOSCOW--WOULD THIS NEWS PROVOKE DIVISIONS WITHIN THE SOCIALIST PARTY SO THAT A POPULAR DEMOCRACY COULD MORE EASILY BE INSTALLED IN PORTUGAL? WOULD THIS BE ENOUGH FOR CAPITAL TO REPRODUCE SUCH NONSENSE? AND IS THIS THEIR CONCEPTION OF OBJECTIVE REPORTING?

THE SECOND NEWS ITEM ON THE FRONT PAGE OF A CAPITAL MARCH 3 IS ENTITLED "ATTEMPTS BEING MADE TO FORM A NEW SOCIALIST PARTY." ONCE AGAIN IT CONCERNS AN ANONYMOUS PIECE OF NEWS BASED ON UNIDENTIFIED SOURCES; BUT WHICH CLEARLY SHOWS AN ANTI-SOCIALIST PARTY BIAS. THE IDEA IS TO PROMOTE CONFUSION AMONG MILITARY SOCIALISTS. IT INTENDS NEITHER MORE NOR LESS TO SUGGEST THAT CONTACTS BE MADE IN ORDE TO CREATE A REAL SOCIALIST PARTY WHICH, "WORKING SHOULDER TO SHOULDER WITH THE COMMUNIST PARTY," WOULD ASSURE THE ARMED FORCES MOVEMENT OF A SUFFICIENT SOCIAL BASIS IN ORDER TO GUARANTEE THE ADVANCEMENT OF THE REVOLUTIONARY PROCESS ALREADY IN TRAIN.

THUS IT INTENDS TO INSINUATE THAT IN ORDER TO BE A TRUE SOCIALIST PARTY, IT IS NECESSARY FOR SOCIALISTS TO WORK "SHOULDER TO SHOULDER WITH THE COMMUNIST PARTY" WITHOUT WHICH THE ARMED FORCES MOVEMENT (AFM) WILL NOT BE ASSURED OF A SUFFICIENT SOCIAL BASE IN ORDER TO GUARANTEE THE ADVANCEMENT OF THE REVOLUTIONARY PROCESS. IS THIS NOT ABUSING THE AFM TO SUGGEST ITS IDENTIFICATION WITH THE COMMUNIST PARTY--AN IDENTIFICATION SO OFTEN DENIED BY THOSE INVOLVED--AND AT THE SAME TIME, TO PRESENT AS PEACEFUL A POLEMICAL INTERPRETATION

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OF THE REVOLUTIONARY PROCESS NOW UNDER WAY?

SUCH NEWS DOES NOT SERVE THE NECESSARY UNITY OF THE DEMOCRATIC LEFT, NOR DOES IT BRING CREDIT TO A NEWSPAPER THAT PRETENDS TO BE OBJECTIVE.

IN ADDITION, THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO NEWS STORIES IS EVIDENT AND THE INTENTIONS AND OPPORTUNISTIC REASONS FOR THIS RELATIONSHIP ARE TRANSPARENT TO ANY READER WHO IS MODERATELY WELL INFORMED ABOUT WHAT IS AT STAKE IN PORTUGAL TODAY. END TEXT.

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